REPAIRING TIME

Kintsugi - Boro



The Art of Caring for Objects in Japan

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Giving new life to broken porcelain and ceramics by filling in cracks with golden seams is the Japanese art of *kintsugi*. Nothing is lost – everything is recycled! Some everyday objects, scarred by time, are also expressions of this unwillingness to discard things. From this rebirth a new cycle emerges and new functions sometimes do as well. Recycled textiles, such as the well-known *boro* illustrate this resistance to waste, the scourge of our consumerist societies.

In Japan, this concept is called *mottainai*, a term that refers to the malaise caused by the needless consumption of resources and materials.

This exhibition features a selection of ceramics restored with gold lacquer, transformed everyday utensils and recycled textiles, patiently collected over the past years.



KINTSUGI

Rather than seeking to conceal damages, *kintsugi* (literally "gold joint") magnifies broken and restored porcelain and ceramics with a lacquer dusted with gold powder. The result, a gathering together of asymmetrical and complex fragments, is a patchwork of zigzags through which the golden lines are the products of chance. The uniqueness of each repaired object gives it new life, making it even more valuable than it was originally. The breakage of a ceramic piece no longer signifies its end or justifies its being thrown away, but instead marks the beginning of a new phase in its continued use.

Legend has it that *kintsugi* was invented in the late 15th century to appease the whims of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436-1490). Having broken a tea bowl received from China, he sent it back to be repaired. When it was returned to him, he was horrified to find that the object had been crudely reassembled with metal staples. The shogun then called upon the best craftsmen of the country to develop a new technique which would be both aesthetically pleasing and respectful of the original object.

This method of restoration has become very popular in recent years, no doubt due to its concurrence with the *wabi-sabi* school of thought, which advocates for the idea that the imperfections in the objects around us should be celebrated and recognized for their beauty. Many collectors have become so enamored with this art of renewal that some have deliberately broken precious pottery in order to repair it with the golden seams of *kintsugi*.

AN ART DEDICATED TO THE TEA CEREMONY

The appearance of *chanoyu* as a cultural and social celebration has a double origin, which is both religious and cultural. It is religious because monks used to drink tea to keep themselves awake during prayers from the middle of the night to the early morning; it thus embodies the values of austerity, humility and awareness of the concept of the transience of the visible world that is proper to Zen Buddhism. It is cultural because it has a connection with the disappearance of feudal society during the 15th century, and its incessant wars. With the unification of Japan by the shoguns and its closure to all contact with foreign countries, an approximately three and a half centuries long era of peace and prosperity was established. The new ruling class, of aristocratic, merchant or military origin, sought refinement, and adopted the tea ceremony or *chanoyu* whose ritual aspect and aesthetics were codified by the tea masters. The most famous of these were Murata Jukō (1423-1502), considered the ceremony's founder, and especially Sen no Rikyū (1521-1591), the favorite of the great shogun Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598). This was an era during which *chanoyu* sandstone pieces were among the most valuable treasures held by great families and monasteries.

This quintessentially Japanese devotional practice is based on the uniqueness of each piece and consequently on the rejection of the search for perfection, which is characteristic of Chinese ceramics, but foreign to the Japanese aesthetic. The originality of a damaged piece repaired with gold or silver lacquer (*kintsugi* or *gintsugi*) imparts value to it. The restoration process, as long and delicate as it is dangerous, is carried out by a master lacquer worker whose virtuosity is as respected as that of the potter.

SABI, OR THE WORK OF TIME

Without *wabi-sabi*, some everyday utensils, scarred by time and honored by centuries of use, would be doomed to oblivion for eternity. In contrast, when the principles of the *wabi-sabi* spiritual approach, derived from Zen Buddhist notions and Taoism, were observed, these objects became destined to be reborn and to endure. If there was ever an aesthetic concept that could not be summarized in words, this is certainly the one.

Wabi-sabi is based on a dual principle: *wabi* expresses solitude, simplicity, melancholy, nature, sadness, or asymmetry and refers to the fullness and modesty that one can experience in the face of natural phenomena; *sabi* evokes the alterations brought by time, the decay of aging things, the patina of objects, the taste for old things, for dirt and rags – the emotions felt when confronted with the effects of time on what men's hands have acted upon.

Wabi and *Sabi* are very old terms. They are encountered in Japanese literature as early as the 15th century, combined with *yojō*, a third principle that can be translated as "sentimental echo." The *yojō* encourages aesthetic worship of stones and the search for beauty in the unexpected. The goal is to create a positive influence on existence through a return to simplicity and tranquil sobriety, and to promote a mindset in which an individual can recognize and feel the beauty of imperfect, ephemeral and modest things.

This thinking is at the heart of the aesthetics of the Japanese scholars, the *bunjin*, whose culture has its roots in that of Chinese scholars. They were men of letters, poets, painters and calligraphers, bamboo artists, especially in the Kansai region, and the ideal life for the *bunjin* was one devoted to the appreciation of ancient works, the creation of nostalgic poems or the holding of noble and elegant conversations (*seidan*) at meetings between friends or *senchado* tea ceremonies in the course of which the latest found

objects and discoveries were unveiled over a cup or two of the beverage. The tea pavilion was decorated with numerous *ikebana* floral arrangements displayed in beautiful woven bamboo baskets in preparation for these events.

The repaired objects that had found new uses and the tea utensils restored with *kintsugi* had a very important place at these reunions of "collectors". They generated a strong emotional effect because of their simplicity, their testimony to the passage of time and the wounds it inflicts, and their proximity to nature. The simplicity of the forms, the nobility of the materials or even the accidents of manufacture like those related to the firing of sandstone were particularly admired. When an object had changed function, wit was also magnified by the addition of a calligraphic *waka* in gold or silver lacquer, by mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*) and *maki-e* lacquer that represented landscapes, plum tree branches wor human forms.

The *bunjin* abandoned themselves to the contemplation and appreciation of the humble beauty of simple things, with patinas that the years and the tests of time had imparted to them.

BORO, "ART RAGS"

Boro, literally "rags", a Japanese term for recycled textiles and indigo patchwork cloth, have so fascinated collectors, fashion designers and artists for over twenty years that they no longer need any introduction. Driven by poverty and the necessities of daily life, the use of these textiles for clothing and bedding by peasants, fishermen, and poor workers, attests to the great frugality of a rural Japan oppressed by an implacable feudalism. Here nothing is lost, everything is recycled, and *mottainai* has no place.

The *boro* carry within them the evocation of family memories and the presence of the ancestors. The fraying and patina of each piece map unknown lives. Obtained through a succession of re-workings and repairs carried out over generations, they are the work of the poorest people, primarily in the Tohoku region of northeastern Japan, and were produced between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 20th century. The practice has long since disappeared and the *boro,* that had become useless, were put aside, discarded or sometimes even intentionally destroyed by a Japanese society embarrassed by its past; in fact few of them have come down to us.

Most fabrics were dyed with indigo of varying intensity ranging from the colors of the night sky to much lighter blues. Throughout Japan, commoners were forbidden to wear bright colors, but gray, brown and black were also present. Each piece of cotton was precious and found its place as it was worn. Seen outside of their original contexts, these simple and innocent patchworks transcend their modest origins. The first thing one observes is how sublimely rich the shades of indigo are. The *boro* are works of art without artist authors and constitute radical compositions that speak to us with the vocabulary of 20th century Western art.

The Abstract Expressionists, like Rauschenberg and his collection of "debris" or Antoni Tapies, who captured the sense of the passage of time in his worn and sand-strewn textures and with them recalled an era of inhumanity and destruction, share the concept of spontaneous abstraction with the *boro*. There are works from the Matterist group of the Informalist art movement and its most famous exponent, Alberto Burri, who glues torn and damaged scraps of fabric or old packing materials directly onto his canvases, which share this aesthetic vision with the *boro* as well. Through their works, these artists have opened our eyes to the beauty and expressive qualities of ephemera and discarded objects. But where *boro* differ fundamentally is in the absence of self-awareness and artistic intent.

What could be closer to the materialization of passing time than the surface of a *boro* with its superimposed layers of scraps of ancient indigo cloth? Everyone can decide for themselves when they see them displayed in this way to compare these "art rags" with the works of one artistic movement or another, but it is undeniable that they are themselves magnificent and fascinating works of art. Their *wabi-sabi* is no less striking.

Ceramics restored with gold lacquer, simple everyday objects given new life, and *boro*, are all testaments to an impulse to reject the material goods of this world and to return to the true nature of things. Through a kind of serene asceticism and austerity, an emotional relationship is created with these objects, selected for their simplicity out of respect for the passage of time.

Philippe Boudin
March 2023

«…/… The guest is honored when the bowl is offered to him with the golden fissure facing him. And the ritual dictates that he should return it with the fissure facing his host to honor him in turn, without ever having taken a drink from the side with the repair on it.»

Kader Attia, communication personnelle in *Cahier d'Anthropologie Sociale* 2025/2

| 1 | *E-Garatsu chawan*

Brush decorated Karatsu-ware tea bowl
Karatsu kilns (Saga Prefecture, Kyushu Island)
Edo period, 17th century
Kintsugi gold lacquer repair with wave patterns
12.7 (h) x 7.2 x 7.2 cm

Karatsu ceramics (唐津焼, *karatsu-yaki*) are in a style produced around Karatsu in Saga Prefecture, Japan. These sandstones pieces, produced mainly between 1597 and the 1630, helped establish an international reputation for the city and its potters. Karatsu ceramics, celebrated for their robustness and simple style, were fired in an elevated kiln and made of an iron-rich clay. They can be part of a decor called *e-Garatsu*, and have a transparent surface glaze, that generally gives them an earthy, simple, and natural appearance.

An old saying hierarchizes the styles of ceramics used during the *chanoyu*: *"ichi Raku, ni Hagi, san Karatsu"*, meaning "first Raku, then Hagi and finally Karatsu". During the codification of the way of tea, master Sen No Rikyū (1521-1591) sought to replace Chinese porcelain bowls with local creations. Breaking with a long tradition, he was not attracted to smooth porcelain but rather by the imperfection and sobriety of sandstone, seen as more sincere and a better fit with the spirit of the tea ceremony.





|2| *Karatsu chawan*

Karatsu-ware tea bowl glazed with iron oxide a
nd *kintsugi* gold lacquer repair
Karatsu kilns (Saga Prefecture, Kyushu Island)
Edo period, 16th century
7.5 (h) x 13 x 12 cm
Awasebako (collection box)

Karatsu has been a hub for exchanges and foreign trade since ancient times and an important production center for pottery since the Azuchi-Momoyama (1573-1603) period. Nowadays, there are still around fifty active kilns as well as ruins of kilns dispersed throughout Saga Prefecture area.

Historians agree that the techniques used for the creation of Karatsu sandstone works were imported from the Korean peninsula during the Japanese invasions of Korea at the end of the 16th century, although some theories suggest that they were already in use before this period. It is generally accepted, according to the *Nihonshoki* epic, that they originated in the region around Kishidake Castle, under the auspices of the Hata (秦氏, Hata-uji), an immigrant clan from mainland China active in Japan beginning in the Kofun period (250-538 AD). Hata is the Japanese reading of the Chinese name 秦 ("state and dynasty"), given to the Qin dynasty and their descendants who settled in Japan.









| 3 | *Karatsu chawan*

Karatsu-ware tea bowl with *gintsugi*
silver lacquer repair

Karatsu kilns (Saga Prefecture, Kyushu Island)

Edo period, 17th century

6.1 (h) x 12.6 x 12.6 cm

Awasebako (collection box)





|4| *Masu sakazuki*

Sake cup
Wood and *maki-e* lacquer
Edo period, dated 1784
9.5 (h) x 17.3 x 17.3cm
Awasebako (collector's box)

Very old measure converted into a sake cup and named "*Roen*", The House of Immortals: The Garden of Lang Peak on Mount Kunlun where the eight Taoist immortals and the Queen Mother of the West reside (Langyuan in Chinese). The artwork is adorned with a humorous Chinese-style poem called "Horse Piss" (馬尿) and a painting of a drunken immortal.

The poem by Minagawa Kien - 皆川淇園 (1734-1807), signed Roku Kien saku, Noun seal. Painting by Totoki Baigai - 十時梅崖 (1749-1804), signed Baigai, Baigai seal.The craftsman Omin gaizan - 桜珉外山 (? - ?), signed Omin tozan zo, Ryuso seal. The name Omin meaning "the cherry tree man", it is possible that this measure is made of the wood of this fruit tree.

夜鄎草叢暗古猩旦歛嚢為宕買礫動知応應馬尿
甲辰初夏
桜珉外山造

"The night is dark in the bushes, an old drunken immortal, emerging from the cave, carrying a sack of gravel stones, in exchange for wine/beer" and "a wine / sake cup (sakazuki)"

Made in the early summer of the year of kinoe-tatsu (1784), made by Omin gaizan"

Masu were traditionally used to measure an amount of rice, beans or even sake. This very old measure, probably over 500 years old and respected for its great age, has been converted into a sake cup. The gold lacquer decoration is sumptuous and attests to the talent of the artists that applied. On one side, the caricature of a drunken immortal appears, along with the signatures and stamps of the three artists.







| 5 | *Hana-bon*

Well pulley converted into an *ikebana* display
Wood, *maki-e* lacquer and mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*)
Edo period, 18th century
9 (h) x 60 x 60 cm

This very old wooden well pulley was used during the Edo period before being converted into a stand for the display of an *ikebana* flower arrangement. The wheel is decorated with ivy leaves (*tsuita*), a motif appreciated by Rinpa artists. This ornament evokes a painting by Ogata Kenzan (1663-1743) of a poem referring to future winds scattering purple ivy leaves and recalls a famous scene from The Tales of Ise (*Ise monogatari*) from the 10th century, in which a courtier, exiled from the capital, meets an itinerant monk along an ivy-strewn path on Mount Utsu.



| 6 | *Kōrai chawan*

Korean *buncheong* stoneware tea bowl with brown lacquer *urushitsugi* restoration of the glaze and neck.

Joseon period (1392–1897), ca. 16th century

Japanese restoration, probably from the end of the Edo period

6.4 (h) x 12 x 12 cm

Buncheong is a form of Korean stoneware ceramic produced from the 14th to 16th centuries. The *buncheong* is made of porcelain earth, covered with feldspar, melting at high temperature (around 1200ºC) with the main characteristic being the use of a white engobe.

Buncheong pottery presents a certain spontaneity with very sober means. The sandstone is simply coated with a white engobe underglaze applied with a brush or by soaking, leaving it partly uncovered. Tradition preserves the memory of kilns created by a Buddhist community that took refuge in the mountains.

The style appears in the early Joseon dynasty largely replacing celadon in common usage. Its appearance corresponds well to the ethics of this dynasty founded by a powerful group of scholars of the Confucian movement who were guided by principles of austerity and sobriety. This practice disappeared almost entirely after the invasions of 1592-1597, during which many kilns were destroyed and many potters deported to Japan.





| 7 | *Kōrai hakeme chawan*

Hakeme type Korean bowl, stoneware with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Joseon period, 16th-17th century
Awasebako (collection box)
7.2 (h) x 17.7 x 17.7 cm

With the emergence of the *chanoyu*, or *wabicha*, Korean bowls gradually replaced the *tenmoku* produced in China and became central to the aesthetics of the tea ceremony. The term *Kōrai chawan* refers to the bowl produced in Korea from the late 15th century to the 18th century. Originally produced in large quantities, these dishes were used in Korea for rice, salted vegetables, soup or alcohol. In the 15th and 16th centuries, the export of Korean products was strictly prohibited by the Joseon government and the first bowls to reach Japan were probably smuggled.

The *hakeme* is a slip decoration technique. The white engobe is applied by brush, initially over most of the piece, but later more as an accent. Above this slip layer, the bowl is finished with a transparent ash glaze.



| 8 | *Kinkai Kōrai wan*

Korean celadon bowl with gray ash glaze and *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration

Official kiln of Gimhae, South Korea

Joseon period, 17th-18th century

5.6 (h) x 18.9 x 18.9 cm

Awasebako certified by collector Nakano Bunroku:

> *"Chosen kinaki-fu tomon-gai kanyo kama-ato toshosuru Korai-yaki kama-ato yori hakkutsu shitari Seiji-wan nari, Taisho junen, kanoto-tori toshi, sangatsu nijuichi-nichi shutsudo, Nakano Bunroku"*
>
> *"This celadon bowl was excavated just outside the East Gate of the old official kiln at Gimhae, on the 21st of the third month of the kanoto-tori year, Taishō 10 (1921), certified by Nakano Bunroku"*



Celadon is "*a color, a bluish green, which takes its name from the color of the ribbons of the protagonist of Astrée, Céladon (written between 1607 and 1627 by Honoré d'Urfé); but it is also a particular type of coating. Once applied to stoneware or porcelain, it must be fired at 1200°C. The main agent of this specific color comes from a very low percentage of iron (about 3%). The more iron oxide is added to the preparation, the darker the green will be, until it becomes black (6% iron). Another constraint: the firing must be done in reduction... Not a single ounce of oxygen must pass through the kiln, otherwise it will transform the much-desired color into olive green!*"[1]



1 - Mathilde Rétif, Cheongja, *Le secret du rayonnement technique et esthétique des céladons coréens*, in Tokonoma Magazine, 2020

| 9 | *Kōrai mishima chawan*

Mishima type Korean bowl, *buncheong* stoneware
with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Joseon period, 16th century
6.4 (h) x 17.7 x 17.7 cm

This stoneware bowl with engobe decoration under a greenish gray glaze has so-called "rope curtain" decoration with chrysanthemums (in the center). When the hardened material has the consistency of leather, the decoration is firmly stamped into the body of the ceramic before firing. The bowl is then dipped in the engobe to fill the hollows. After a first firing, and once the engobe has been sanded, a transparent glaze is applied. The bowl is then returned to the kiln. The decorations can be varied due to the multiplicity of stamps used for intaglio stamping, and their combinations. The "rope curtain" pattern with chrysanthemums is often used.

The term *mishima*, originally controversial and poorly documented, is nevertheless widely used to designate a decoration of white engobe on a darker background. However, in the 1930s, a Korean art historian, Koh Yu-seop (1905-1944), renamed this type of ceramic *bunjang hoecheong sagi*, which means "gray-green powdered porcelain", and the name was subsequently shortened to *buncheong sagi*, the scholarly term now in use.



| 10 | *Hagi chawan*

Hagi-ware tea bowl and with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration

Saka Koreizaemon (1912-1981), 11th generation

8.4 (h) x 12.6 x 12.6 cm

Tomobako (original box signed by the artist)

Inscription on the bowl

Yuzen-giku saki

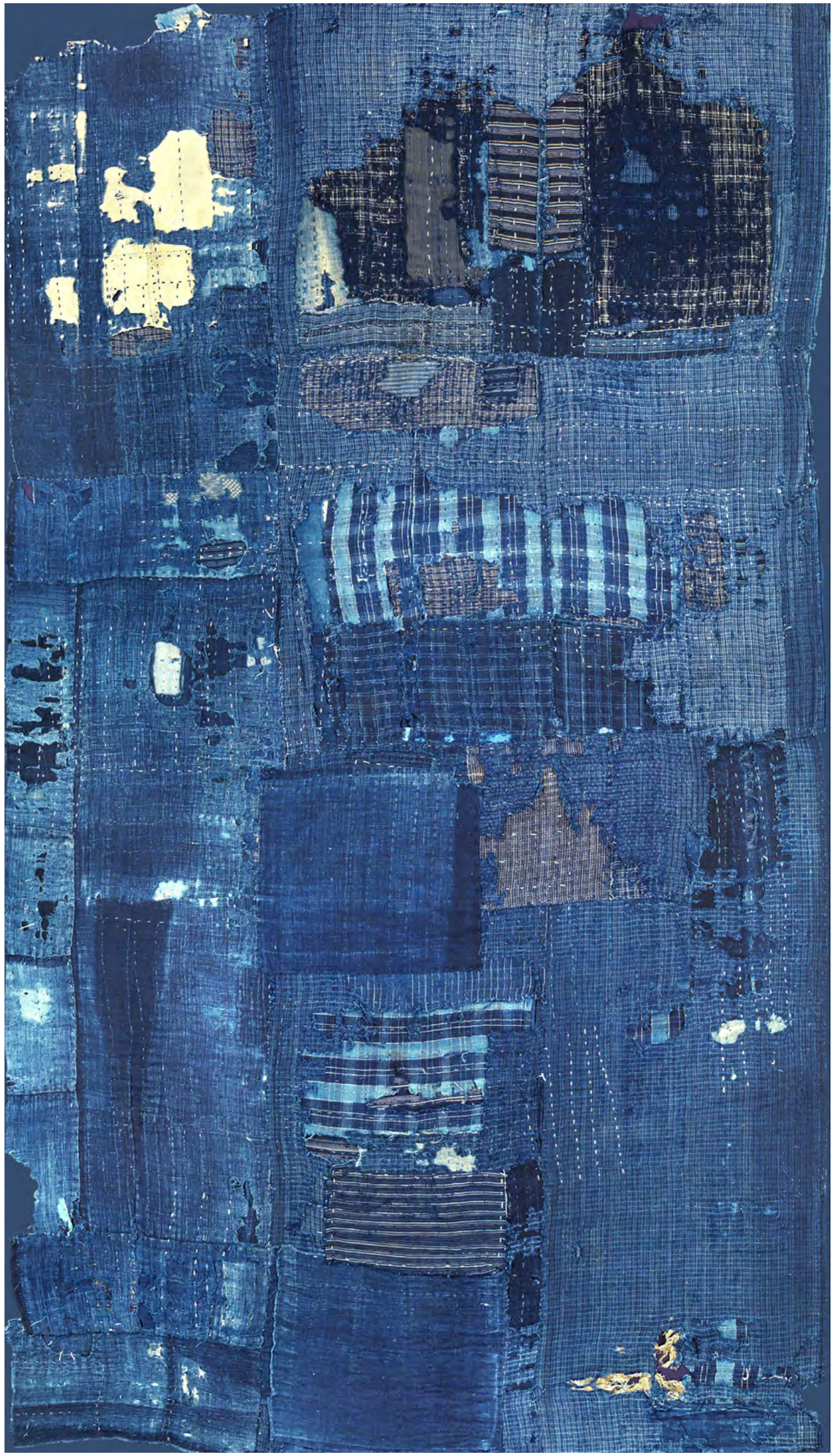
Little St. Michael's daisies bloom

At the end of the 16th century, the shogun Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598) invaded the Korean peninsula, instigating seven years of war. Many hostages were taken and a number of craftsmen, mainly potters, were among them. One of the shogun's generals, Terumoto Mōri (1553-1625), lord of the Mōri clan, brought two brothers specialized in the art of pottery, Li Jak Kwang and Li Kyung, with him to his domain in Yamaguchi. He settled them in his fortified city of Matsumoto, present-day Hagi, where they opened a kiln. In 1625, Li Kyung was appointed chief potter and took the Japanese name Saka Koraizaemon, passed down from generation to generation, currently the 14th.



| 11 | *Boro futonji*

Futon blanket made from recycled cotton fabrics
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th- first quarter of the 20th century
169.5 (h) x 95 cm
Stretched on canvas and mounted on an aluminum frame



| 12 | *Boro futonji*

Futon blanket made from recycled cotton fabrics
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
200 (h) x 150 cm





| 13 | *Boro tsuno-bukuro*

Patched hemp bag with recycled cotton patches
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
104 (h) x 64 cm
(both sides)

Tsuno-bukuro, literally "bag-horns", is made from a single long piece of hand-woven fabric, folded and then sewn on the bias to produce a uniquely shaped long bag. It is torn and has been repaired with many small pieces of fabric. It is not known if the name *tsuno-bukuro* refers to the two points, or two horns, of the opening which result from the diagonal construction, or what its use was.









| 14 | *Hibachi*

Old well bucket converted into a brazier
Wood, *maki-e* lacquer, tin and copper core
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
21.8 (h) x 26.5 x 26.5 cm

This old well bucket was fitted with an inner copper container to convert it into a brazier. For this rebirth, the object is adorned with a decor representing the Musashino Plain, located west of Tokyo, by the light of a crescent moon. This is a frequently seen motif in Japanese art, and celebrated by the masters of the *ukiyo-e*.



| 15 | *Korin maki-e mokusei kashibon*

Tray for sweets, decorated with ancient symbols of power

Wood, *maki-e lacquer* in the Kōrin style, mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*), tin and silver

Meiji period (1868-1912)

6.5 (h) x 37 x 26 cm

Awasebako (collection box)

Ancient symbols of power are scattered on the surface of a natural rough wood. Designs include mother-of-pearl and tin *magatama* beads, a silver mirror with gold calligraphic designs, an engraved spear head, the golden head of a staff, and others. The collector's box is titled *Kōrin maki-e mokusei kashibon* (wooden sweets tray decorated with lacquer designs in the style of Kōrin). A spectacular work of art combining the magnificent technique of Ogata Kōrin (1658-1716) and demonstrating the appreciation of *wabi-sabi* with its degraded wooden surface.



| 16 | *Kōrai katawa-guruma tokkuri*

Korean *buncheong* stoneware pear-shaped flask with Japanese double restoration

Joseon period (1392–1897), ca. 14th-15th century for the ceramic

Edo period (1603-1868) for the *kintsugi*

Meiji period (1868-1912) for the chased silver collar

17.4 (h) x 12.5 x 12.5 cm

Awasebako (very old collector's box)

This exceptional testimony to the art of restoration presents a double repair: a gold lacquer *kintsugi* with *maki-e* pattern of wheels in the waves dating from the Edo period (1603-1868), and a raised chased silver collar, probably added during the Meiji period (1868-1912).

The "*katawa-guruma*" pattern represents wheels partly submerged in the waves. It is inspired by a tradition from the Heian period (794-1185) during which aristocrats traveled in carts pulled by oxen. The wheels of the carts were plunged into rivers after long exposure to the sun to prevent the wood from drying out and splitting. This ornament is frequently seen on other objects made at this time, on the back sides of mirrors, on lacquers, as well as in the illustrations of the scrolls on which the sutras were copied.



| 17 | *Kuro Satsuma chawan*

Satsuma-ware tea bowl with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration.

Momoyama period (1573-1603)

Shikibako and *oshifuku*

5.9 (h) x 15.3 x 15.3 cm

Hakogaki: Matsudaira Osumi no kami tono rusu yaku, Hori Man'emon yori Murayama Choko e ai okurase sourou Ko-Satsuma-yaki kore ie ni denrai su

"This ancient ceramic from Satsuma, transmitted in the family, once belonged to Hori Man'emon 堀万右衛門 *the Osumi-no-kami (Satsuma fief) of the Matsudaira family and was then transmitted to Murayama Choko* 村山長古*"*



Hori Man'emon (active from the mid to the late 18th century) was a successful shipping magnate who headed the vast Seikai-ya 西海屋 (kaisen don'ya 廻船問屋) maritime syndicate. He was the patron of many artists including Kimura Tangen (1679-1767) and Watanabe Shiko (1683-1755). Hori Man'emon lived in Kyoto and was a frequent visitor to the Kyoto Imperial Palace, the aristocratic Konoe family (Konoe Uchisaki, 1728-1785), and the Edo Castle. He held an official position representing the *Osumi-no-kami* (Satsuma fief) of the Matsudaira family. Murayama Choko was a tea master (江戸城茶頭 "*Edo-jo chagashira*") at the Edo Castle, active around 1750-1770.

Satsuma-yaki originated in the 16th century when the Shimazu family of the Satsuma domain in southern Kyūshū settled Korean potters there after the Japanese invasion of Korea (1592–1598) led by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Subsequently, after being displayed at the 1867 World's Fair in Paris, this stoneware became a popular item for export to Europe.









| 18 | *Hagi daizara*

Standing Hagi-ware cup with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Edo period, 18th-19th century
10.9 (h) x 20.2 x 20.2 cm
Awasebako (old collector's box)



| 19 | Kitaōji Rosanjin 1883-1959

Small celadon porcelain dish with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration

Bears the stamp *Ro* 呂 of the artist Kitaōji Rosanjin on the back

2.7 (h) x 15.6 x 15.6 cm

Awasebako (collector's box) with *hakogaki* by Takegoshi Chosei

Abandoned by his mother, Kitaōji Rosanjin was raised by his adoptive family. In 1915, after having exercised his talents as a self-taught calligrapher in Tokyo, and traveled to Korea and China, he began his studies of ceramics under the direction of Suda Seika. After two years, he moved to Kamakura and opened his own kiln. He traveled to the West only once, in 1954, for the exhibition of his works in Europe and the United States. Very close to the owners of the most renowned restaurant in Tokyo, *Le Club des Gourmets*, he created all the tableware used in the establishment. His works are unclassifiable, and include pieces in various disciplines and in multiple styles.

Japanese painter, calligrapher, lacquer artist, ceramicist and essayist, Kitaōji Rosanjin is considered the inventor of gastronomy in Japan, which is called *bi-shoku*, or the aesthetics of eating. In *The Way of Taste*, he proclaims in a manifesto:

> *"Cooking, while drawing on nature for its materials and satisfying the most primitive urge of human beings, sublimates this skill to the level of an art".*
>
> *In 2013, the Guimet Museum presented an exhibition entitled Kitaōji Rosanjin, Genius of Japanese Cuisine.*

Takegoshi Chosei is a collector of works by Rosanjin, who lives in Kamakura, and is the author of a reference work on the artist.





| 20 | *Karatsu guinomi*

Small Karatsu-ware sake cup of the *shihohai* type, with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Edo period, 17th century
4.5 (h) x 7.8 x 7 cm

A *guinomi* (ぐい呑み) is a ceramic cup for serving sake. It is smaller than a *chawan* for tea. It can have a base and even small handles. The shapes are free and there are many styles. Here, the *kintsugi* repair is adorned with *miru* (海松) seaweed, also called "sea pine". In Japan, seaweed has been harvested and used in food for thousands of years. But here there is a play on words. The term *miru* also means "to see someone in order to court them". In the Tale of Genji (*Genji monogatari*), the protagonist composes a poem about the sea pine, longing to see his beloved.





| 21 | *Karatsu chawan*

Karatsu-ware tea bowl with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Edo period, 17th century
6.1 (h) x 14.1 x 12 cm

The *kintsugi* is adorned with the *kikusui-mon* (菊水紋), a symbol meaning "chrysanthemum water" which refers to a Chinese legend and *nō* play attributing eternal youth to drinking morning dew from the leaves of the chrysanthemum. Here, the petals are simplified and represent a *kogiku* (小菊), or small chrysanthemum.

This *mon* has been associated with Kusunoki Masashige (1294-1336), a military leader of the Nanboku-chō period (1337-1392), since the 14th century. This humble samurai fought on behalf of Emperor Go-Daigo in his attempt to regain control of Japan from the Kamakura shogunate. Later, his name became synonymous with loyalty and extreme devotion to the emperor.





| 22 | *Karatsu guinomi*

Small *hiragata* type Karatsu-ware sake cup, with *kintsugi* powdered gold restoration
Edo period, 17th-18th century
4 (h) x 7.9 x 7 cm



The breakage of a ceramic piece no longer signifies its end or justifies its being thrown away, but instead marks the beginning of a new phase in its continued use.

Philippe Boudin

| 23 | *Sencha-bon*

Old piece of *matsu* (pine) converted into a *sencha* tray and decorated with lobster, octopus and turbot

Wood, *maki-e* lacquer, tin and mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*)

Edo period, 18th century

Awasebako (collector's box)

2.5 (h) x 39.6 x 39.6 cm

This work magnifies the marquetry technique invented by Ogawa Haritsu (Ritsuō) (1663-1747), a famous lacquer master, painter (*ukiyo-e*) and *haiku* poet. Ritsuō is his artist name (*gō*). His style, called "*Haritsu*", incorporates many types of materials such as lead, gold, silver, copper, iron, and fragments of ceramics, ivory and glass into the *maki-e* lacquer.



| 24 | *Masu-gata asagao maki-e tobacco-bon*

Wood, *maki-e* lacquer and mother-of-pearl
Edo period, 18th century
8.4 (h) x 17.5 x 17.5 cm

An old wooden rice measure (*masu*) with *maki-e* lacquer application and mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*) representing a *tanka* (traditional Japanese poem) and a morning glory flower and its leaves.

> *Asakahoya asana asana ni*
> *Sakahete sakari hisashiki*
> *Hananizo arikeru*
>
> *The life of each morning glory*
> *is short but long*
> *is the flowering period*

This *tanka* was written by the 112th Emperor of Japan, Emperor Reigen (1654-1732). He was enthroned in 1663 and reigned for 24 years, until he abdicated in 1687 and was succeeded by Emperor Higashiyama. After leaving office in 1693, he underwent tonsure in 1713 and died at the age of 79. Emperor Reigen showed innate abilities in his mastery of calligraphy and poetry, composing some 1,600 *tanka* poems and publishing thirty anthologies of imperially compiled poetry.







| 25 | *Boro futonji*

Futon blanket made from recycled cotton fabrics
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
160 (h) x 150 cm
(both sides)

Boro are textiles obtained by a series of repairs carried out generation after generation on bedspreads and clothing. They were made by poorer farmers and fishermen between the 18th and early 20th centuries, mainly in northeastern Japan. The scraps used for patching were pieces of indigo cotton of small sizes and of different origins. This *futonji* was dyed with indigo and decorated using the *katazome* technique, applying rice paste through stencils to create the reserve. The entire fabric was then immersed in the dye until the desired color was achieved. Once the paste had been removed, the fan pattern was revealed.





| 26 | *Boro sodenashi*

Sleeveless jacket in recycled cotton fabrics
with *sashiko* stitching

Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century

90 (h) x 66 cm

(both sides)





| 27 | *Boro futon kotatsu*

Thick *kotatsu* cover of recycled cotton fabrics, topstitching with hemp thread (*sashiko*)
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
163 (h) x 153 cm
(both sides)

A *kotatsu* (炬燵) is a low wooden support covered with a *futon* or thick blanket, on which a table top rests. The underside of the *kotatsu* was heated. It was the most common method of heating and the real focal point of Japanese homes. One sat around it on *zabuton* that were placed on the *tatami*.







| 28 | *Kōrai ido-waki hira chawan*

Korean *buncheong* stoneware bowl, *hira*-type (shallow), and gold lacquer *kintsugi* restoration
Joseon period, 16th-17th century
4.3 (h) x 17.2 x 17.2 cm
Awasebako (collector's box)
For a similar bowl: see Tachibana Museum, Fukuoka, Japan.

Ido-waki fall into the category of *Ido*-type Korean tea bowls. This *chawan* dating from the Joseon period is accompanied by a very old box which seems to date from the Edo period. Its glaze is creamy, slightly cracked, and attests to heavy use over a long period of time. This type of bowl has long been favored by *chajin* (tea people) and remains highly prized today as relatively few of these pieces from this era have survived intact. Several delicate *kintsugi* gold lacquer restorations adorn the edge of the bowl with a wave pattern.

The *awasebako* bears the characters 井戸碗, 古高麗, 平茶碗 (*ido-wan ko-korai hira chawan*): "bowl with a foot (kodai) Ido, old Korean, shallow type"; and 井戸碗、古高麗、平茶碗 安永九年、子八月、常栄求之 (*An'ei 9 nen, ne, hachigatsu, Joei kore o motomeru*): "I found this, signed Joei 常栄 (collector's name), the 8th month, in the year of the rat, An'ei 9th year (1780)".







| 29 | *Kōrai chawan*

Korean *buncheong* stoneware bowl, *Hakbong-ri* type, with floral iron oxide decoration and *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration

Joseon period, 17th-18th century

6.5 (h) x 12.1 x 12.1 cm

Awasebako (collector's box)

This bowl comes with a very old wooden box with a *hakogaki* in Japanese and Korean. The Japanese inscription 朝鮮焼茶碗 (*Chosen-yaki chawan*) means "*A Korean ceramic bowl*"; and the Korean one means "*Joseon Dynasty tea bowl*; 상도로영경 Sangdo Yeongyeong (name and location of a tea house; 조성국 Cho Sheng Kook (proper noun).

Buncheong ceramics decorated with iron oxide were mainly produced in the kilns of Hakbong-ri, a village located at the foot of the sacred mountains of Mount Gyeryong in the northern part of Chungcheong Province. At the beginning of the Joseon dynasty (1392-1897), Emperor Taejo decided to reject Buddhism and to embrace Confucianism. Many monks were then forced to give up their religious life and adopted a secular way of life. Among them were those in the Gyeryong Mountains, who opened kilns and began to produce this type of ceramic called *Hakbong-ri*.



| 30 | *E-Garatsu tsubo*

Small *Kishidake*-type Karatsu stoneware jar with leaf-shaped design and iron oxide underglaze

Momoyama-Edo period, ca. 1590-1610

9.5 (h) x 14.5 x 14.5 cm

Kiribako (modern storage box)

It was in the Kishidake region, on the island of Kyūshū around the 1580s, that Korean immigrant potters introduced the *noborigama*, or climbing kiln, for the first time in Japan. This type of kiln was technologically more advanced than the earlier ones and allowed for better control of firing. This small jar (*tsubo*), painted with a simple pattern reminiscent of the lower part of the *dai* (or "large"), character was made in a kiln of this kind. This austere aesthetic was promoted by followers of *wabi chanoyu*, the tea ceremony, during the Momoyama period (1573-1603).

A similar jar in the collections of the MET New York, gift of Dr. and Mrs. Roger G. Gerry, 2000 (2002.447.21)



| 31 | *Karatsu chawan*

Karatsu-ware tea bowl with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration

Momoyama period (1573-1603)

5.5 (h) x 10 x 10 cm

Awasebako (collector's box)







| 32 | *Ko-Karatsu sakazuki*

Small Karatsu-ware dish with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Edo period (1603-1868), ca. 17th century)
3.5 (h) x 12.9 x 12.9 cm



| 33 | *Ko-Karatsu sakazuki*

Small Karatsu-ware dish with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Edo period (1603-1868), ca. 17th century)
4 (h) x 13.6 x 13.6 cm



| 34 | Ko-Seto chaire

Seto-ware tea-dust pot with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration with *Seigaiha* pattern

Bone and gold leaf lid

Excavated (*horinote*) from the ancient Tsubigama kiln, Seto

Kamakura period (1185-1333), ca. 14th century

Awasebako (collection box) and *oshifuku* (bag and silk cord)

3.8 (h) x 7 x 7 cm

The *Seigaiha* wave (literally *Blue sea and waves*) is an ancestral Japanese motif that appeared in the 6th century and is commonly seen on textiles, illustrations or ceramics. It was used to illustrate seas and oceans on maps. Water and waves signify power and resistance, building blocks of Japanese culture. The waves are represented with concentric circular arcs, superimposed on each other to overlap.





| 35 | *Ki-Seto aburage-de chawan*

Yellow Seto-ware tea bowl with *yobitsugi* red lacquer restoration
Momoyama-Edo period, ca. 16th-17th century
6 (h) x 13.5 x 13.5 cm

Ki-Seto is a high-fired ceramic that originated in the late 16th century and is part of the Mino family of styles that relate almost exclusively to the tea ceremony. Ki-Seto is considered the most difficult of the Mino styles (Shino, Oribe, Setoguro (Black Seto), and Ki-Seto (Yellow Seto)) to perfect and is perhaps the least well-known. These styles are produced in the Seto and Mino regions of Gifu Prefecture. *Aburage-de* (literally *"fried tofu"*) is a thick matte yellow glaze applied onto a wrinkled or semi-rough surface.

There are several variations in the art of restoring ceramics with lacquer. The most common is *kintsugi* with gold joints; next comes *gintsugi* with silver joints; then *tintsugi*, with tin; then *urushitsugi*, with pure lacquer; and finally, *yobistugi*, or the art of inserting a shard from another piece, as in this example.





| 36 | *Masu-gata asagao maki-e tobacco-bon*

A pair of old wooden rice measures (*masu*) with *maki-e* lacquer application and mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*) representing stylized wheat and pine trees

Bearing the Hōitsu signature and stamp

Wood, *maki-e* lacquer and mother-of-pearl

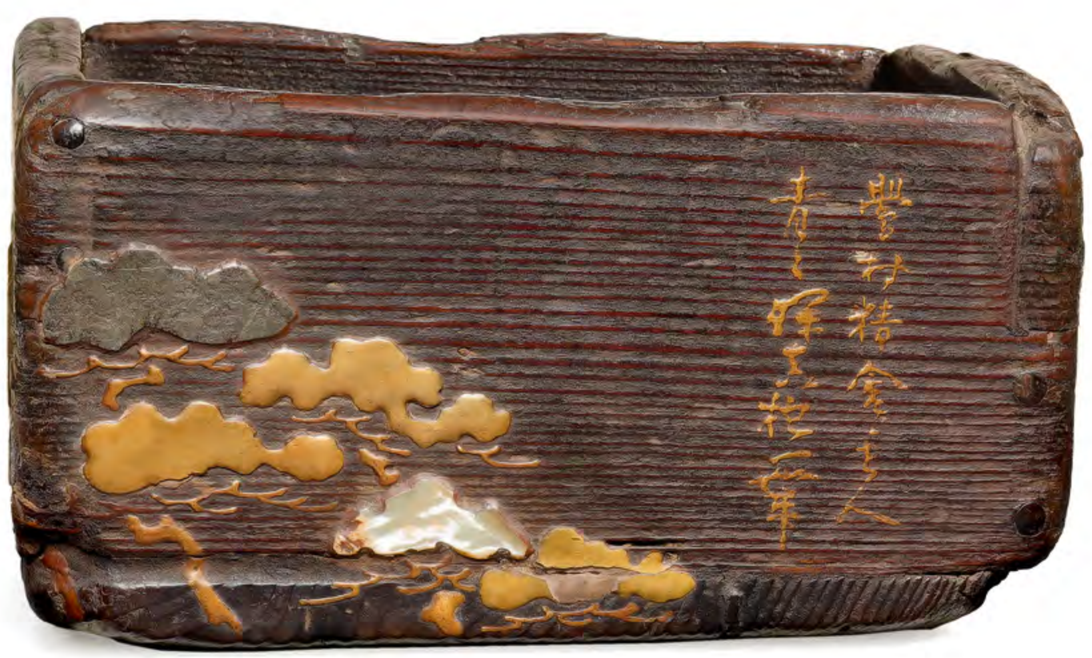
Edo period, 18th-19th century

Awasebako (old collector's box)

9 (h) x 17.2 x 17.2 cm

Sakai Hōitsu (1761-1829), whose real real name was Sakai Tadamoto (nickname: Kishin; *gō* (artist name) Ōson, Keikyōdō-jin, Nisonan, Uka-an and Hōitsu), was a famous Japanese painter of the Rinpa school.







| 37 | *Ki-Seto cha-kaiseki mukozuke*

Edo period (1603-1868), ca. 18th century
Awasebako (old collector's box)
7.5 (h) x 9.6 x 9.2 cm

Tray for the simple meal of the tea ceremony in yellow Seto-ware and with *kintsugi* gold lacquer repair featuring the motifs of *uguisu* (the bush warbler) singing on an *ume* branch (plum tree in blossom), symbolizing the arrival of spring, and bearing the auspicious inscription 壽, *kotobuki* (meaning "Wishes for a long and happy life") in gold letters.

Exhibited and published in *Flickwerk – The Aesthetics of Mended Japanese Ceramics*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University Ithaca NY, USA and Museum für Lackkunst, a division of BASF Coatings AG Münster, Germany, 2008





| 38 | EIRAKU Hozen 1795-1854

Chawan (tea bowl) in Kyo-yaki (Kyoto ceramic) and *kintsugi* restoration with gold lacquer

Edo period, 19th century

7.5 (h) x 12.6 x 12.6 cm

Eiraku Hozen (永樂保全) was a prominent ceramicist of the late Edo period, a time when imperial temples and Daimyo houses began to order tea utensils from potters in Kyoto. Born Sentaro, he was adopted by Eiraku Ryozen, the tenth generation of Zengoro ceramicists. This family was specialized in the production of *doburo* (a ceramic brazier for the tea ceremony), and one of the ten artisan families (*senke jisshoku*) commissioned by the Omote-senke tea school. In 1817, Eiraku Hozen succeeded his adoptive father, thus becoming the 11th generation of Zengoro.



| 39 | *Karatsu chawan*

Karatsu-ware tea bowl with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration.

Momoyama period (1573-1603)

5.6 (h) x 10.6 x 10.6 cm

Awasebako (collector's box)



| 40 | *Ki-Ido chawan*

Yellow *Ido*-type Korean stoneware tea bowl with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration
Korea, Joseon period, 16th-17th century
7.1 (h) x 17.5 x 17.5 cm
Awasebako (collector's box)
Hakogaki: 黄井戸茶盌、名物 *Ki-Ido chawan, meibutsu* (*Yellow Ido-type tea bowl, a superb object*)

Ido chawan (井戸茶碗) is the name given to a type of Korean bowls from the Joseon era made beginning in the 16th century as humble bowls of rice, and later elevated in status in Japan by tea masters due to their very "*wabi*" ash glazes. A famous saying, attributed to the tea master Sen no Rikyū, classifies tea utensils as: *First Ido, Second Raku, Third Karatsu*. For purely Japanese ceramics, the saying differs slightly: *First Raku, Second Hagi, Third Karatsu*.

The term *meibutsu* is given to the most outstanding works of art. Only a limited number of tea bowls are registered as *meibutsu*. In this case, it is most likely an appreciation expressed specifically by a former owner of the bowl.







| 41 | *E-Shino mukozuke*

Momoyama period (1573-1603)
Awasebako (old collector's box)
4.2 (h) x 16.2 x 16.2 cm

Shino style Mino-ware bowl for the simple meal of the tea ceremon, with *kintsugi* gold lacquer repair and an auspicious motif of a heron in the reeds.

Shino style sandstone pieces (志野焼, *Shino-yaki*) were produced in Mino Province (now Gifu Prefecture) and are characterized by a feldspathic glaze.





| 42 | *Ko-Imari tokkuri*

Imari porcelain sake bottle with *kintsugi* gold lacquer restoration on the neck

Edo period, 18th century

12 (h) x 14 x 11 cm

Blue flowers decorate this collapsed porcelain bottle, produced in the Imari region on the island of Kyūshū. The collapse was the result of a firing accident in the kiln. Such objects are normally destroyed, but in Japan they are sufficiently valued to be embellished with a *kintsugi* restoration.







| 43 | *Gumo hibachi*

Old well bucket converted into a brazier
Wood, *maki-e* lacquer and copper core
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
20 (h) x 25 x 25 cm

This old well bucket has been fitted with an inner copper container to convert it into a brazier. The object is decorated with a spider's web and dead leaves. The design continues around the brazier's perimeter. In historical accounts, the earth spider, *tsuchi-gumo*, is used to refer to bandits, rebels, and clan leaders who challenged the authority of the emperor. The Joro-gumo is a *yokai* from Japanese mythology, a spider spirit that can transform into a very beautiful woman or be half-woman half-spider.





| 44 | *Kōdai-ji Higashiyama tobacco-bon*

Pair of tobacco accessory trays made from pieces of boards from the ceiling of the Kōdai-ji temple of Higashiyama

Meiji Period (1868-1912), dated Meiji 5 (1872)

Awasebako (collector's box)

東山高臺寺天井の古板とて
友人某の贈れるかく一雙の煙盆と
なして花のあした月のゆふべの来客ニ
雅談風詠を助くるの具となし
て永く家の寶とす。　干時
明治第五春三月　蒼翠庵主人
湖上天数翁しるす

A friend having given me pieces of boards from the ceiling of the Kōdai-ji temple of Higashiyama (a temple of the Zen Buddhist Rinzai school in Kyoto), I made this pair of tobacco-bon out of them.

As these are accessories that are propitious to distinguished conversation and refined poetic citations at my hosts' places during those mornings among the flowers and those evenings under the moonlight, they will forever be family treasures.*

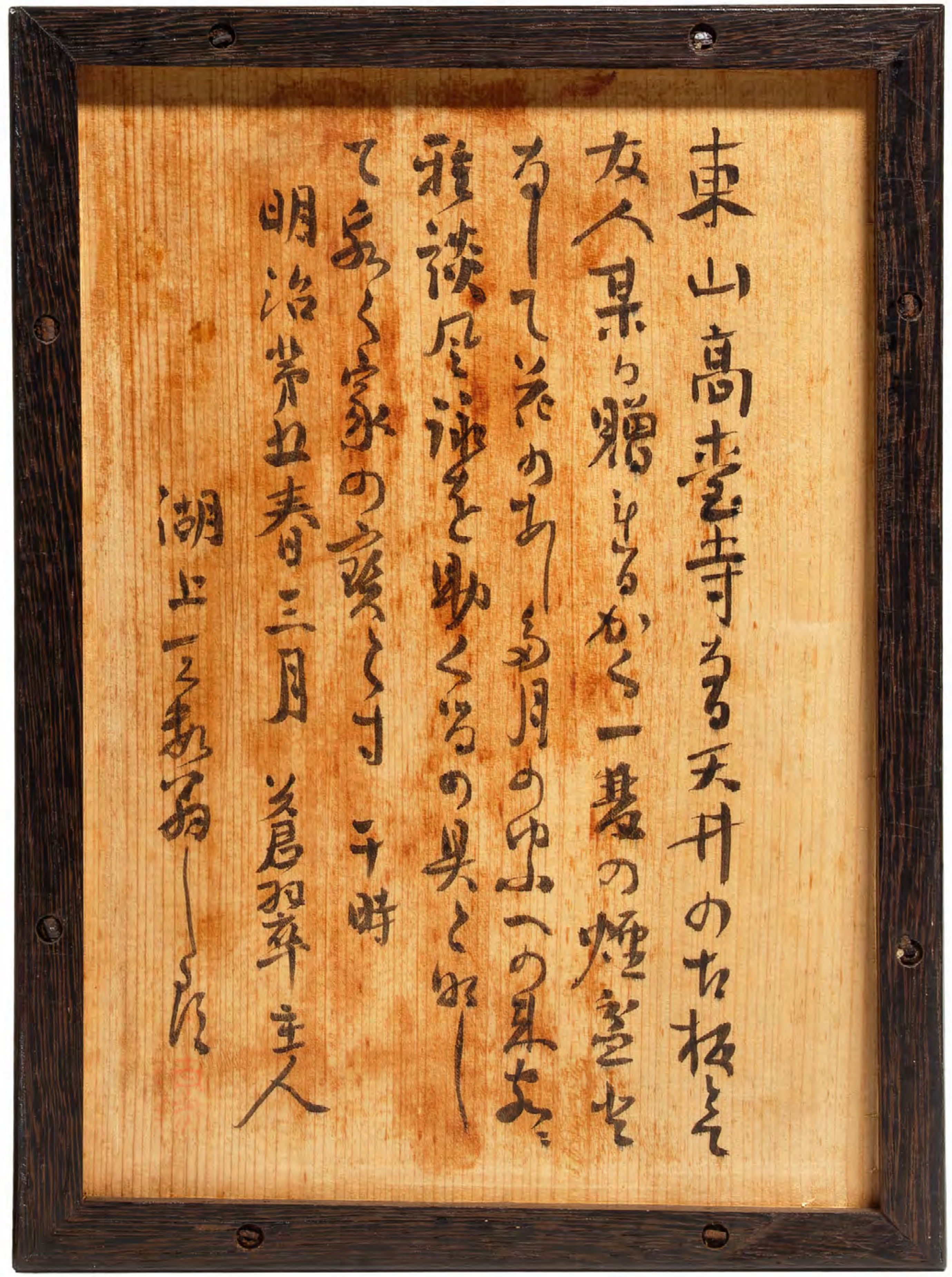
Meiji 5 (1872), spring, 3rd month. Sōsui[an] shujin (the master of the blue and green retreat). Written by Tensūō ("Celestial Destiny" the Elder), *above the lake.*

* *"Hana no ashita, tsuki no yūbe"* – these are allusions to the *hanami* festivities of spring and the *tsukimi* festivities of mid-autumn respectively.








東山高臺寺なる天井の古板とて
友人某ゟ贈らるゝかく一基の煙草
盆として花のあした月の夕への果友
雅談風流を助くるの具となし
て永く家の寶とす　于時
明治第五春三月　蒼翠主人

| 45 | *Boro noragi*

Garment made of recycled cotton fabrics with *sashiko* stitching

Edo-Meiji period, 19th century

139 (h) x 130 cm

(both sides)



| 46 | *Boro hanten*

Garment made of recycled cotton fabrics
with *sashiko* topstitching
Edo-Meiji period, 19th century
84 (h) x 98cm
(both sides)





| 47 | *Boro futonji*

Futon blanket made of recycled
cotton fabrics
Edo-Meiji period, ca. 19th century
119 (h) x 118 cm
(both sides)





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